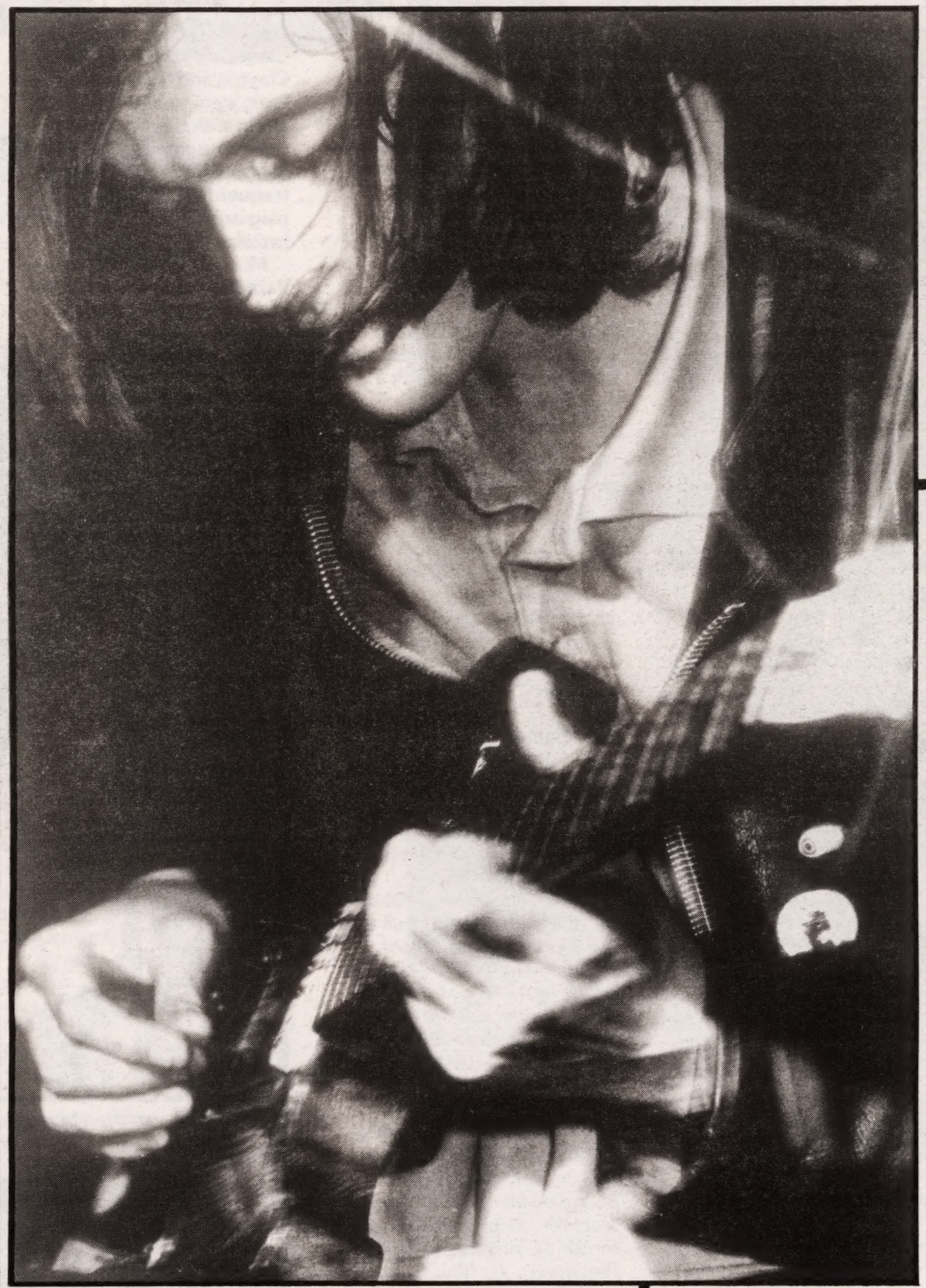
KEITH CAMERON

LIVES

SIDEKICK-DELIC SHOWDOWN



JASON: COMING reedy or not

SPIRITUALIZED
London Charing Cross Road Marquee

AS AN aficionado of Spacemen 3 on vinyl, it was rather disappointing to see them live, playing a set that teetered on the brink of total chaos, unable to capture their hallmarked moody, smacked-out calmness onstage. In the context of their 'image' and 'reputation', it may have been deliberate, but the rock 'n' roll cliché of watching a band or individual fall to pieces in public is boring. I'd rather have seen the Doors at the Whiskey A Go Go in 1967 than in Miami.

Spiritualized, then, are like a more organised Spaceman 3. They are, essentially Spaceman 3 minus Sonic Boom, and manage to reproduce a similar sound with a degree of accuracy. Drummerless, sweatless and seated, the band ran through a set of bleak, calm and ethereal songs that hint at the 'comedown' sound of the Stones' 'Aftermath'.

The songs, however, tended to melt into one long 'Hypnotized' noise – not unpleasant, but hardly noticeable. It was only with the single, 'Anyway That You Want Me', that the band came to life. Perhaps, though, it's more to do with the unfamiliarity of the material; there were some moments of quite terrible beauty. Jason's reedy vocals tread a thin line between being annoying and being utterly perfect for the sound which is as close to the lobotomized psychedelia of Spacemen 3 as you'll get without going to a Sonic Boom (or Loop) gig. I can hardly wait for more. No surprises, but a really sweet gig.

Tommy Udo